



Department for Transport

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From the Office of the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Patrick McLoughlin

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Dear Sir,

You wrote to the Secretary of State earlier this year, enclosing a model train and short section of track. You had some helpful proposals as to the operation of the West Coast Mainline (WCML).

While the Secretary of State did not have time to read your letter personally, I myself took a keen interest. Your model now adorns my desk.

Turning to your specific points, I am afraid there are some necessary bureaucratic hurdles you will need to overcome before you are able to run passenger services on the National Rail network. I suggest that you contact the Office of Rail Regulation who can provide advice. Their website is at orr.gov.uk.

With regards your rolling stock, I can see expert craftsmanship and high build quality. Government policy is indeed to allow the market to dictate rolling stock solutions, but in the spirit of partnership working, I will make a few recommendations:

- While perfect for the in-home market, wooden carriages are unlikely to meet modern crashworthiness standards for operation on the heavy rail network. Aluminium might be a better bet.
- Though traditional, a locomotive and coaches formation does not use all available scarce space within the maximum train length. Please remember that the maximum length of a train on the WCML is around 260m. May I suggest a multiple unit?
- Your ratio of $\frac{1}{3}$ first class, $\frac{1}{3}$ standard and $\frac{1}{3}$ guard's van is rather wasteful of space. Perhaps building accommodation for the guard's van into the first class coach would be a good approach.